ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The horizontal and vertical offset for the M x N DCT block boundaries are determined for a decompressed image originally produced by a DCT-based compression system, regardless of the amount of compression and/or

5   cropping that had been applied to the image .   The method includes the steps of: a) computing one or more selected DCT coefficients from nonoverlapping, contiguous M x N blocks of the decompressed image, beginning at a selected offset; b) computing a coefficient histogram from a set of values for each selected DCT coefficient obtained from the blocks of the decompressed image; c)

10   computing a dispersion metric from each coefficient histogram; d) repeating steps (a) through (c) for a plurality of offsets within an M x N block; e) comparing the dispersion metrics corresponding to the plurality of offsets to determine the minimum dispersion coefficient histogram; and f) selecting the offset that corresponds to the minimum dispersion coefficient histogram as the offset for the

15   DCT block boundaries.